

MIT OpenCourseWare
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

21W.777 The Science Essay
Spring 2008

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.

Homework #20

Due Tues. 4/29 or Thurs. 5/1 in class

*Provide no later than noon on your workshop day
(Groups TBA)*

Essay 5: The Longer Essay 2500-3000 words (10-12 pages double-spaced)

Write an essay on any subject related to any field of science or technology—their history, their practice, or their social impact. Essay 5 will require a substantial amount of research. Your essay may or may not include autobiographical or biographical elements. It may follow the structure of any of the essays we have read or written. *Your essay may be exploratory or persuasive; either way, it must show your own thinking—your thinking about the material is just as important as the information you present.*

The increased scale of this project allows you to develop ideas with more richness and depth. It may present challenges in structure, both the sequence of ideas and the essay's overall shape, as well as challenges in sustaining your readers' interest. (You may want to look back at some of our readings for examples of possible approaches available to you in terms of structure and voice.) As you get more involved with your topic, particularly if it's technically complex, you may face challenges of clarity and keeping your writing concrete and lively. The successful essay will not necessarily be the one that tackles the most difficult topic, but the one that makes its topic come alive and makes the topic's significance clearly apparent to the non-specialist reader. Before you begin your Introduction, think about who you want to reach with this essay—your audience—and why.

- Plan to use 3-4 subheads in this essay, and try to outline or sketch out what these headings will be and what goes in each section before you begin writing.
- Sources: Refer to important sources within your text –“According to . . .” and so on. For the 1st draft, include other sources in parens. ; these can either be inserted in text or edited out in the final version. DO include a list of references, as you have been doing for the other essays.
- Bring 5 first drafts to class for workshopping.
- After I read your 1st draft, you'll do one substantial revision of Essay 5 and then polish it for your portfolio.